

GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (26)

John Edmonds (12 July 2013)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

South Africa expresses citrus concerns in EU trade talks

Citrus trade and increased monitoring for black spot will serve as focal points in trade talks between South Africa and the European Union today. South Africa expressed hope of evening out an increasingly growing trade imbalance between the two regions, highlighted by recent tensions over the citrus trade. During the 6th SA-EU Summit, South African trade minister Rob Davies said the country will look to negotiate on the EU's decision to "upgrade the surveillance" of fruit imports. "The EU has improved or upgraded its surveillance on citrus products which are bearing citrus black spot. They have now strengthened and made more stringent the requirements, and this could affect quite a large number of jobs in the South African citrus industry," Davies said in a government release. Davies asked for greater flexibility, which he said the EU had not yet shown. "There's a low risk that this could be transmitted to the orchards of Europe. They have increased their surveillance, and if they find five consignments [with citrus black spot], they ban you. That is of concern to us," he said. According to South African government statistics, about 45% of the nation's citrus exports go to the EU every year. Overall, the industry ships around 100 million cartons of citrus to 45 countries. South Africa and the European Union currently have a free trade agreement in place that permits duty-free access to the EU for 65% of South Africa's agricultural products...

[freshfruitportal.com; 18 July 2013]

South Africa, EU to tackle job creation

The 6th South Africa-European Union Summit ended in Pretoria on Thursday with the leaders of the two sides in agreement that joint programmes in education and training were needed to address the common challenge of job creation. In a joint communiqué issued after the summit, South African President Jacob Zuma, EU Commission president José Manuel Barroso and European Council president Herman Van Rompuy said education and training were the key factors contributing to job creation and economic growth...Barroso said negotiations were ongoing on citrus black spot in the export of South African produce to Europe and he was confident that a mutually beneficial agreement would soon be reached...SA had cautioned that the "upgraded surveillance" would greatly affect the South African citrus industry, which exports around 100-million cartons to 45 countries, generating R6-billion in foreign exchange. This would also lead to job losses as the industry employed 40 000 permanent workers and 40 000 seasonal workers.

[www.southafrica.info; 19 July 2013]

Uruguay: DIEA expects a 27% drop in citrus production

The Directorate of Agricultural Statistics (DIEA) predicts a 27% fall in citrus production, according to data obtained from the citrus survey, made in the second half of May between producers of the four main species: oranges, tangerines, limes and grapefruits. Citrus production will drop 88,000 tons from the previous harvest. Limes will have the biggest drop (33%). A statement from the DIEA indicates that the production will be similar to that of 2009, when there was a decline in production after a severe drought, and subsequently hail, which affected the sector significantly. The weather is also responsible for this year's production problems. Last year there was a significant frost that caused heavy losses of fruits and also damaged plants and trees, compromising this year's flowering and fruiting stages.

The report indicates that there was a decline in the volume of production but not in the fruit's quality, which "has a good size and can be exported". At the time of the survey, total stocks of the four species amounted to 7.2 million plants, which implies a 2% decrease over the previous year. Oranges, with 3.4 million plants, contributes 47% of total inventory. The producers reported their intention of uprooting 208,000 plants in 2013. That is an average of 3% of the total stock. In percentage terms, the grapefruit (5%) is the species that would be uprooted the most. The final data of this harvest will be gathered in November, with the citrus Spring survey.

[Freshplaza.com; 17 July 2013]

Guava fruit flies threaten California's fruit industry

California agriculture officials are launching an "emergency eradication" in response to guava fruit flies. The flies come from Asia and somehow made their way to the Bay Area. Officials say the tiny insects, if left unchecked, could be devastating to the State's fruit industry.

[www.nbcbayarea.com; 18 July 2013]

If you need more information on any of these issues, or if there is anything else that CGA can assist with, please contact us at 031 7652514, or johne@cga.co.za

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